

VZCZCXRO8086
RR RUEHBZ RUEH DU RUEHMR RUEHRN
DE RUEHTO #0082/01 0261408
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
R 261408Z JAN 10
FM AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 1216
INFO RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0603
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MAPUTO 000082

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/28/2019
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [MZ](#)
SUBJECT: GUEBUZA INAUGURATION FLAUNTS EXCESS, YET REVEALS
PARTY WORRIES WITH URBAN YOUTH

Classified By: A/DCM Matthew Roth for reasons 1.4 (b+d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: Television cameras captured scenes of several thousand revelers at Frelimo headquarters celebrating the election results in December, and independent media remarked on the excesses and atmosphere of indulgence. The party continued during the Jan 12 parliamentary inauguration, presided over by Guebuza who replaced long-standing Speaker Eduardo Mulembwe with senior Frelimo politico and Guebuza loyalist Veronica Macamo. At the Presidential Inauguration on January 14, Frelimo's festivities ramped up, with Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe, among several African heads of state in attendance, commenting that a "Frelimo victory is my victory too." Guebuza's inauguration speech called for inclusivity and consolidation of domestic politics. He touched on new priorities for his administration, including youth, urban poverty, generational change, and a need for Mozambique to strengthen bilateral and multilateral international cooperation. In a moment of inaugural levity, while Guebuza was seated on a large ornate throne with a traditional 'praise singer' at his side, a Mozambican choir belted out the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel's Messiah, "...and He shall reign forever and ever," leaving many diplomats wondering exactly who the singers were referring to. Urban youth, increasingly disenchanted with both an uncharismatic Guebuza and an aging Frelimo party, received special attention in the President's inaugural speech as he committed to addressing the problems of the urban poor.
END SUMMARY.

FRELIMO PARTY CELEBRATION EXCESS

¶2. (C) In late December, television cameras captured images of 3,000 revelers feting the formal announcement of elections results at the richly bedecked Frelimo party headquarters on the outskirts of Maputo. Independent media remarked on the excesses, including the 40 head of cattle slaughtered, vast quantities of beer consumed, and an atmosphere of indulgence in an incredibly poor country. Guebuza gave a televised victory speech similar in style to the U.S. tradition for the first time. Guebuza noted in his remarks that election results showed he was President of all Mozambicans because the number of votes he received exceeded the total number of Frelimo party members, claiming this provided true legitimacy to his administration.

GUEBUZA FLAUNTS AT PARLIAMENTARY OPENING

¶3. (C) At the January 12 inauguration of a new parliamentary session, President-elect Guebuza arrived at the National Assembly with an extensive motorcade of late-model luxury

sedans. Previous Assembly President and Frelimo party stalwart Eduardo Mulembwe (who had held the position for 15 years, had been considered a possible candidate for president in 2014 and has his own independent power base) was not re-nominated for the position. In his place, former Vice President of the AR (and Guebuza loyalist) Veronica Macamo was chosen at a recent Frelimo Political Commission meeting, and hence ran uncontested for the position. Macamo, a law professor, is also a member of the elite Frelimo Central Committee and Political Commission.

MUGABE AT INAUGURATION: FRELIMO VICTORY IS MINE TOO

14. (C) On January 14, Guebuza held his formal presidential inauguration with Heads of State from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Namibia, Zambia, and South Africa. Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe told the press before the ceremony that a "Frelimo victory is my victory too." Former presidents of Zambia, Botswana, and South Africa were also present. India, China, and Brazil sent ministerial-level delegations, while most other countries sent lower-level delegations or were represented by in-country diplomats.

INAUGURATION SPEECH: A FOCUS ON YOUTH

15. (C) Speaking for nearly an hour, Guebuza thanked the Mozambican people for participating in the electoral process

MAPUTO 00000082 002 OF 002

in an orderly and peaceful manner, and, subtly addressing USG expressions of concern about opposition party exclusion, stressed that the process was "inclusive." Guebuza also called on opposition parties to work with the ruling part in what he termed a new "consolidation of democracy." Turning to foreign affairs, Guebuza said his administration would strengthen international cooperation, both bilateral and multilateral, mentioning SADC, the AU, and the EU. Guebuza then spoke about the need to combat urban poverty as well as the issue of generational change in Mozambique, calling on the younger generations to build on the experiences of those who fought for independence and in Mozambique's protracted civil war.

AND THE CHORUS SANG, "HE SHALL REIGN FOR EVER AND EVER"

16. (C) Interestingly, the inauguration attracted only about 5,000 Mozambican onlookers despite it being a national holiday and with free transportation available to the ceremony. Meanwhile, television coverage showed Mozambicans enjoying Maputo's beaches in large numbers, suggesting a generalized disinterest in the proceedings. The four-hour event included a series of cultural interludes that included more than one moment of levity. During one session, for example, while Guebuza was seated on a large ornate throne with a traditional 'praise singer' at his side, a Mozambican choir belted out the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel's Messiah, "...and He shall reign forever and ever," leaving many diplomats wondering exactly who the singers were referring to.

COMMENT: LESS THAN INSPIRATIONAL

17. (C) The Presidential Inauguration was a humdrum event which inspired few. Many diplomats commented on the lack of public enthusiasm for the event, noting the low turnout and how government-provided free transportation to the event went unutilized. By focusing on youth in his inauguration speech, Guebuza may be attempting to address what many analysts

perceive as one of the significant threats to Frelimo and its continued political dominance in Mozambique. Urban youth are increasingly disenchanted with both an uncharismatic Guebuza and an aging Frelimo party. Guebuza had a relatively poor showing in urban election returns, particularly in Maputo city, where despite an overwhelming number of Frelimo supporters holding down the majority of government jobs in the capital, Guebuza nearly lost in his home district. Even so, Guebuza seems oblivious to the criticisms--many by those same youth-- generated by his ostentatious shows of personal wealth and recent lavish spending for political party and government events.

CHAPMAN